

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 5591

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TSPA, EG

SUBJ: NUCLEAR ENERGY AGREEMENT

REF: STATE 163982

1. I CALLED ON MINISTER OF POWER SULTAN TODAY TO GIVE HIM REVISED TEXTS OF NUCLEAR ENERGY AGREEMENT AND ACCOMPANYING NOTE AS SET FORTH STATE 156347. I EXPLAINED SUBSTANCE OF CHANGES AND WHY THEY HAD TO BE MADE. I RECALLED WE HAD PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED THE SENSITIVITY OF THIS SUBJECT, PARTICULARLY AFTER THE INDIAN NUCLEAR EXPLOSION

AND THE RESULTANT INTENSE CONGRESSIONAL CONCERN, AND THAT WE WOULD HAVE TO MOVE STEP BY STEP. WE FULLY RECOGNIZE SULTAN'S UNDERSTANDABLE DESIRE TO MOVE AHEAD EXPEDITIOUSLY AND HE COULD RELY ON THE FACT THAT WE WILL MOVE AS RAPIDLY AS CIRCUMSTANCES PERMIT.

2. I ALSO OUTLINED FOR SULTAN SEVERAL CONSIDERATIONS

SET FORTH PARAS 2A THROUGH C OF REFTTEL, WHICH I HAD EARLIER TODAY GIVEN TO FAHMY. (I DID NOT, HOWEVER, MENTION PARA 2D OF REFTTEL, SINCE THIS IS SOMETHING WHICH FAHMY RATHER THAN SULTAN SHOULD DETERMINE.) THE IDENTICAL REVISIONS AND THE SAME PROCEDURE, I STRESSED, APPLY TO THE

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ISRAELI NUCLEAR ENERGY AGREEMENT.

3. SULTAN LISTENED ATTENTIVELY AND SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THE NEED TO MOVE STEP BY STEP. HE UNDERTOOK TO STUDY THE REVISED TEXTS AND TO LET ME HAVE GOE REACTION ASAP. HE WAS NOT DISTURBED ABOUT THE TIGHTENED SAFEGUARD PROVISIONS SO LONG AS THEY WERE EQUALLY APPLICABLE TO ISRAEL. HE DID ASK, HOWEVER, HOW USG IS HANDLING SAFEGUARDS IN CONNECTION WITH THREE NUCLEAR PLANTS WHICH IRAN HAS RECENTLY PURCHASED FROM FRANCE, SINCE HE UNDERSTOOD FRANCE ONLY ABLE TO PROVIDE SUCH PLANTS WITH USG ASSISTANCE. I SAID I WAS NOT AWARE OF THIS, BUT SUGGESTED IAEA SAFEGUARDS WOULD SURELY APPLY EVEN TO A FRENCH PROVIDED NUCLEAR POWER PLANT. HE DID NOT PURSUE THE POINT, BUT SUGGESTED A DATE SHOULD BE FIXED AS SOON AS PRACTICAL FOR BOTH EGYPT AND ISRAEL TO SIGN THE AGREEMENT.

4. I THEN SUGGESTED TO SULTAN THAT, IN LIGHT OF THE CONSIDERATIONS ALREADY MENTIONED, IT WOULD PROBABLY BE WISE NOT TO PRESS FOR USG FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN CONNECTION WITH THE PROPOSED NUCLEAR POWER PLANT AT THIS TIME. PERHAPS HE COULD FIND SOME NON-US FUNDING TO BEGIN THE PROJECT AND ONE COULD LOOK AT THE MATTER AGAIN AT A LATER POINT TO SEE IF SOME US FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION MIGHT THEREAFTER BE POSSIBLE. SULTAN, WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY SPOKEN WITH NOOTER ABOUT THIS, READILY AGREED THAT THIS WAS NOT THE TIME TO PRESS FOR USG FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE. HE LEFT OPEN THE POSSIBILITY OF DOING SO AT A LATER POINT.

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